

# PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

To:  
W. KARL RENNER  
FISH & RICHARDSON P.C.  
1425 K STREET, N.W., 11TH FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005-3500

## PCT

NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT AND  
THE WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
SEARCHING AUTHORITY, OR THE DECLARATION

(PCT Rule 44.1)

Date of mailing (day/month/year)	
Applicant's or agent's file reference 06975-483WO1	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> See paragraphs 1 and 4 below
International application No. PCT/US05/07204	International filing date (day/month/year) 07 March 2005 (07.03.2005)
Applicant AMERICAN ONLINE, INC.	

1. ☒ The applicant is hereby notified that the international search report and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority have been established and are transmitted herewith.

**Filing of amendments and statement under Article 19:**

The applicant is entitled, if he so wishes, to amend the claims of the international application (Article 19(1)(b) of the PCT) (PCT Rule 46):

**When?** The time limit for filing amendments is normally two months from the date of receipt of the international search report.

**Where?** Directly to the International Bureau of WIPO, 34 chemin des Colombettes  
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, Facsimile No.: (41-22) 338.82.70.

For more detailed instructions, see the notes on the accompanying sheet.

2. ☐ The applicant is hereby notified that no international search report will be established and that the declaration under Article 17(2)(a) to that effect and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority are transmitted herewith.

3. ☐ With regard to the protest against payment of (an) additional fee(s) under Rule 40.2, the applicant is notified that:

☐ the protest together with the decision thereon has been transmitted to the International Bureau together with the applicant's request to forward the texts of both the protest and the decision thereon to the designated Offices.

☐ no decision has been made yet on the protest; the applicant will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

4. **Reminders**

Shortly after the expiration of 18 months from the priority date, the international application will be published by the International Bureau. If the applicant wishes to avoid or postpone publication, a notice of withdrawal of the international application, or of the priority claim, must reach the International Bureau as provided in Rules 90bis.1 and 90bis.3, respectively, before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication.

The applicant may submit comments on an informal basis on the written opinion of the International Searching Authority to the International Bureau. The International Bureau will send a copy of such comments to all designated Offices unless an international preliminary examination report has been or is to be established. These comments would also be made available to the public but not before the expiration of 30 months from the priority date.

Within 19 months from the priority date, but only in respect of some designated Offices, a demand for international preliminary examination must be filed if the applicant wishes to postpone the entry into the national phase until 30 months from the priority date (in some Offices even later); otherwise, the applicant must, within 20 months from the priority date, perform the prescribed acts for entry into the national phase before those designated Offices.

In respect of other designated Offices, the time limit of 30 months (or later) will apply even if no demand is filed within 19 months.

See the Annex to Form PCT/IB/301 and, for details about the applicable time limits, Office by Office, see the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume II, National Chapters and the WIPO Internet site.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/ US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201	Authorized officer <i>Andrew Caldwell</i> Andrew Caldwell Telephone No. 571-272-3868
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(PCT Rule 44.1)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 06975-483WO1	Date of mailing (day/month/year) <b>15 FEB 2006</b>
International application No. PCT/US05/07204	International filing date (day/month/year) 07 March 2005 (07.03.2005)
Applicant AMERICAN ONLINE, INC.	

1. ☒ The applicant is hereby notified that the international search report and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority have been established and are transmitted herewith.

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1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, Facsimile No.: (41-22) 338.82.70.

**For more detailed instructions,** see the notes on the accompanying sheet.

2. ☐ The applicant is hereby notified that no international search report will be established and that the declaration under Article 17(2)(a) to that effect and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority are transmitted herewith.
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- ☐ no decision has been made yet on the protest; the applicant will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

**4. Reminders**

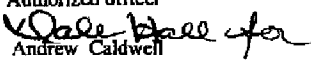
Shortly after the expiration of 18 months from the priority date, the international application will be published by the International Bureau. If the applicant wishes to avoid or postpone publication, a notice of withdrawal of the international application, or of the priority claim, must reach the International Bureau as provided in Rules 90bis.1 and 90bis.3, respectively, before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication.

The applicant may submit comments on an informal basis on the written opinion of the International Searching Authority to the International Bureau. The International Bureau will send a copy of such comments to all designated Offices unless an international preliminary examination report has been or is to be established. These comments would also be made available to the public but not before the expiration of 30 months from the priority date.

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See the Annex to Form PCT/IB/301 and, for details about the applicable time limits, Office by Office, see the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume II, National Chapters and the WIPO Internet site.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/ US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201	Authorized officer  Andrew Caldwell Telephone No. 571-272-3868
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# PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

## PCT

### INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 06975-483WO1	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> <div style="display: inline-block; width: 100%; font-size: small;">             see Form PCT/ISA/220 as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.           </div>	
International application No. PCT/US05/07204	International filing date ( <i>day/month/year</i> ) 07 March 2005 (07.03.2005)	(Earliest) Priority Date ( <i>day/month/year</i> ) 05 March 2004 (05.03.2004)
Applicant AMERICAN ONLINE, INC.		

This international search report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This international search report consists of a total of 11 sheets.

☒ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

**1. Basis of the Report**

a. With regard to the **language**, the international search was carried out on the basis of:

- ☒ the international application in the language in which it was filed.
- ☐ a translation of the international application into \_\_\_\_\_, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1(b))

b. ☐ With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, see Box No. I.

2. ☐ **Certain claims were found unsearchable** (See Box No. II)

3. ☐ **Unity of invention is lacking** (See Box No. III)

4. With regard to the **title**,

- ☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.
- ☐ the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the **abstract**,

- ☐ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.
- ☒ the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box No. IV. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. With regard to the **drawings**,

a. the figure of the **drawings** to be published with the abstract is Figure No. 3

- ☒ as suggested by the applicant.
- ☐ as selected by this Authority, because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.
- ☐ as selected by this Authority, because this figure better characterizes the invention.

b. ☐ none of the figures is to be published with the abstract.

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US05/07204

### Box IV TEXT OF THE ABSTRACT (Continuation of Item 5 of the first sheet)

The technical features mentioned in the abstract do not include a reference sign between parentheses (PCT Rule 8.1(d)).

#### NEW ABSTRACT

Organizing a participant list includes maintaining a participant list of users of an electronic communications system to be used by a first user of the electronic communications system. Communications strengths between the first and each of the users included in the participant list are determined (320) (325). The users included in the participant list are organized based on the corresponding communications strengths. Communications strengths may be determined for users included in a group within the participant list, and the user within the group may be organized within the group based on communication strength. An additional group in the participant list in which some or all of the users included in the participant list are organized based on communications strengths may be provided. Additional users may be added to the participant list, based on the communications strengths between the first user and the additional users (330). New users may be added to the participant list in response to notifications of the new users that are sent to the first user (335). Identifiers included in the participant list may be categorized into groups within the participant based on attributes associated with the identifiers (340).

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US05/07204

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : G06F 15/16

US CL : 709/206

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 709/204,207; 707/1, 3; 705/1

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)  
Please See Continuation Sheet

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y, P	US 2005/0050143 A1 (GUSTER et al.) (03 March 2005 (03.03.2005)), Abstract, Figures 3-6, page 1, paragraph [0009].	1-119
Y, P	US 2004/0215721 A1 (SZETO et al.) (28 October 2004 (28.10.2004)), Figure 4, page 3, paragraph [0034].	37-40, 48-89, 116-119
Y, P	US 2004/0122810 A1 (MAYER) (24 June 2004 (24.06.2004)), Abstract, paragraph [0091].	1-142
Y, P	US 2004/0117443 A1 (BARNES) (17 June 2004 (17.06.2004)), Abstract, page 5, paragraphs [0046]-[0047].	48-83, 120-142

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☐ See patent family annex.

\* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T"

later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X"

document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y"

document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&"

document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

07 February 2006 (07.02.2006)

Date of mailing of the international search report

15 FEB 2006

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201

Authorized officer

*Andrew Caldwell*  
Andrew Caldwell

Telephone No. 571-272-3868

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/US05/07204

Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 3:

EAST Search:

Search terms: maintaining, categorizing, sorting, organizing, attendee, attendants, participants, buddy lists, friends, users, instant messaging or IM.

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WASHINGTON, DC 20005-3500

# PCT

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 06975-483WO1		Date of mailing (day/month/year) <b>15 FEB 2006</b>
<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> See paragraph 2 below		
International application No. PCT/US05/07204	International filing date (day/month/year) 07 March 2005 (07.03.2005)	Priority date (day/month/year) 05 March 2004 (05.03.2004)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC IPC(7): G06F 15/16 and US Cl.: 709/206		
Applicant AMERICAN ONLINE, INC.		

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I      Basis of the opinion
- ☐ Box No. II      Priority
- ☐ Box No. III      Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV      Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V      Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI      Certain documents cited
- ☐ Box No. VII      Certain defects in the international application
- ☐ Box No. VIII      Certain observations on the international application


## 2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/ US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201	Date of completion of this opinion 07 February 2006 (07.02.2006)	Authorized officer  Andrew Caldwell Telephone No. 571-272-3868
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**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.

PCT/US05/07204

**Box No. I Basis of this opinion**

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

- ☒ the international application in the language in which it was filed
- ☐ a translation of the international application into \_\_\_\_\_, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1(b)).

2. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

a. type of material

- ☐ a sequence listing
- ☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing

b. format of material

- ☐ on paper
- ☐ in electronic form

c. time of filing/furnishing

- ☐ contained in the international application as filed.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in electronic form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.

3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table(s) relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

4. Additional comments:



WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.  
PCT/US05/07204

**Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43 *bis*.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims <u>1-142</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims <u>1-142</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-142</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO

2. Citations and explanations:

Claims 1-142 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art (e.g., Guster et al., Szeto et al., Mayer, Barsness) do not teach or fairly suggest a method of passively populating a list of participants of an electronic communications, the method comprising: maintaining a participant list of users of an electronic communications system to be used by a user of the electronic communications; identifying existing users of the electronic communications system that are known to the user; determining a communication strength between the user and each of the identified existing users; and designating the identified existing users with the highest communications strengths for addition to the participant list.

Claims 1-142 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(4), and thus this claimed invention has industrial applicability because the subject matter claimed can be made or used in computer industry.

## NOTES TO FORM PCT/ISA/220 (continued)

The letter must indicate the differences between the claims as filed and the claims as amended. It must, in particular, indicate, in connection with each claim appearing in the international application (it being understood that identical indications concerning several claims may be grouped), whether

- (i) the claim is unchanged;
- (ii) the claim is cancelled;
- (iii) the claim is new;
- (iv) the claim replaces one or more claims as filed;
- (v) the claim is the result of the division of a claim as filed.

The following examples illustrate the manner in which amendments must be explained in the accompanying letter:

- 1 [Where originally there were 48 claims and after amendment of some claims there are 51]:  
"Claims 1 to 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37 to 48 replaced by amended claims bearing the same numbers; claims 30, 33 and 36 unchanged; new claims 49 to 51 added."
- 2 [Where originally there were 15 claims and after amendment of all claims there are 11]:  
"Claims 1 to 15 replaced by amended claims 1 to 11."
- 3 [Where originally there were 14 claims and the amendments consist in cancelling some claims and in adding new claims]:  
"Claims 1 to 6 and 14 unchanged; claims 7 to 13 cancelled; new claims 15, 16 and 17 added," or  
"Claims 7 to 13 cancelled; new claims 15, 16 and 17 added; all other claims unchanged"
- 4 [Where various kinds of amendments are made]:  
"Claims 1-10 unchanged; claims 11 to 13, 18 and 19 cancelled; claims 14, 15 and 16 replaced by amended claim 14; claim 17 subdivided into amended claims 15, 16 and 17; new claims 20 and 21 added."

### "Statement under Article 19(1)" (Rule 46.4)

The amendments may be accompanied by a statement explaining the amendments and indicating any impact that such amendments might have on the description and the drawings (which cannot be amended under Article 19(1)).

The statement will be published with the international application and the amended claims.

It must be in the language in which the international application is to be published.

It must be brief, not exceeding 500 words if in English or if translated into English.

It should not be confused with and does not replace the letter indicating the differences between the claims as filed and as amended. It must be filed on a separate sheet and must be identified as such by a heading, preferably by using the words "Statement under Article 19(1)."

It may not contain any disparaging comments on the international search report or the relevance of citations contained in that report. Reference to citations, relevant to a given claim, contained in the international search report may be made only in connection with an amendment of that claim.

### Consequence if a demand for international preliminary examination has already been filed

If, at the time of filing any amendments and any accompanying statement, under Article 19, a demand for international preliminary examination has already been submitted, the applicant must preferably, at the time of filing the amendments (and any statement) with the International Bureau, also file with the International Preliminary Examining Authority a copy of such amendments (and of any statement) and, where required, a translation of such amendments for the procedure before that Authority (see Rules 55.3(a) and 62.2, first sentence). For further information, see the Notes to the demand form (PCT/IPEA/401).

### Consequence with regard to translation of the international application for entry into the national phase

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that, upon entry into the national phase, a translation of the claims as amended under Article 19 may have to be furnished to the designated/elected Offices, instead of, or in addition to, the translation of the claims as filed.

For further details on the requirements of each designated/elected Office, see the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume II.